

OFFICE OF REGIONAL AND BILATERAL AFFAIRS (ORBA) WEEKLY REPORT: September 29 – October 3, 2018

ISSUES OF NOTE

MEXICO CHAIRS ALTERNATIVE REPRESENTATIVES (ALT REPS) MEETING OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION (CEC)

- Last June, the EPA Administrator chaired and hosted the CEC Council Session in Oklahoma. At the conclusion of the session, Mexico's Secretary for Environment and Natural Resources assumed the chairmanship of the Council. In July, Mexico elected a new government that will be in place in December. Mexico's new Secretary for Environment will serve as Council Chair.
- On October 3, Mexico hosted a Alt Reps call to initiate planning for the 2019-2020 operations of the CEC.
- U.S. Alt Rep Jane Nishida, Canada Alt Rep Isabelle Berard, and Mexico Alt Rep (Chair) Enrique Lendo, discussed strategic planning, government transitions, and budgets.
- The Alt Reps instructed the CEC Secretariat and the General Standing Committee to continue implementation of the 2017-2018 Operational Plan (OP) projects through June 2019. This approach restores the original OP project implementation period to 2019 but maintains the 2018 reduced project budgets. [TROCHE]

EPA HOSTS 11TH U.S.-CHINA REGIONAL AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT (RAQM) CONFERENCE

- On Oct. 1, OAQPS hosted the 11th U.S.-China RAQM Conference between EPA and the Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE) to exchange technical and policy strategies to advise China's ozone management and VOC emission control strategies.
- Mr. Liu Bingjiang, Director General of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment's Department of Air Environment Management, emphasized the importance of U.S.-China cooperation on air quality in addressing international and transboundary air pollution. DG Liu highlighted China's progress on air pollution initiatives since strengthening collaboration with the U.S. through exchanges and forums such as the U.S.-China RAQM.
- Topics covered during the conference included many components of air quality management, including monitoring, modeling, emissions inventories, air quality trends and

regional cooperation. The Chinese delegation described their effective PM control programs and their concern about rising levels of ozone.

- Within the past decade, China has established a network of over 5000 air monitors to provide real-time hourly air quality data for many major Chinese cities and the most polluted regions.
- Since 2005, EPA and MEE have coordinated and participated in ten RAQM conferences, which have been successful in educating national and provincial environmental officials in the various aspects of air quality management and reducing transboundary air pollution. This was only the second RAQM in the United States and the first one in RTP. ORBA Director Mark Kasman and OAQPS Director Peter Tsirigotis helped welcome the delegation to EPA. [Kasman, Almodovar, Voorhees, Chen]

AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT REGIONAL DIALOGUE REVIEWS PROGRESS

- ORBA Deputy Director, Lisa Almodovar and Orlando Gonzalez, CAFTA-DR Program Manager, participated in the air quality management regional dialogue in CAFTA-DR countries (El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Dominican Republic), October 2-3, 2018.
- The purpose of the dialogue was to:
 - Have a face-to-face review of the key concepts and homework from the first two of four air quality management webinars delivered: QA/QC and Technical and Analytical Capacity.
 - Engage in a discussion and information exchange among countries based on lessons learned thus creating leveraging opportunities
 - Identify best practices and/or challenges on QA/QC and technical analytical capacity in specific countries or cases.
 - Conduct hands-on training with air monitoring instruments, including air sensors.
- In addition, the dialogue provided a platform to discuss the deployment of the remaining two air quality management (AQM) webinars: emission inventories and air quality management standards.
- The participants' feedback on the effectiveness (e.g. deployment and materials and information) of the first two AQM webinars helps EPA and Battelle Institute (collaborating partner through the EPA-Battelle cooperative agreement) with the development of the remaining two AQM webinars. The third webinar--emission inventories-- is expected to be delivered in November 2018. The fourth webinar will be deployed in early 2019. [Gonzalez, Almodovar, Guen-Murray].

OITA AND OLEM FACILITATE INTERNATIONAL E-WASTE MANAGEMENT NETWORK WORKSHOP

- On September 24-29, 2018, the U.S. EPA and Taiwan Environmental Protection Administration sponsored the 8th International E-Waste Management Network (IEMN) Workshop in Manila, Philippines to increase the implementation of environmentally sound management of electronic waste.
- According to the United Nations, the growing volume of electronic waste, including mobile phones, laptops, televisions, refrigerators and electrical toys, poses a major threat to the environment and human health. In 2016, only about 20 percent of all e-waste globally was recycled. Certain components of electronic products contain materials that are hazardous when not disposed of correctly and can leach lead and other substances into soil and groundwater. Many of these products can be reused, refurbished, or recycled in an environmentally sound manner so that they are less harmful to the ecosystem and reduce the need to extract or manufacture virgin materials to fabricate new products.
- Government officials from 11 countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Egypt, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Tuvalu and Vietnam) enhanced their capacity to: assess downstream markets for e-waste materials; understand the opportunities and impacts of major market changes; examine the benefits and barriers involved with new processes and technologies; identify effective ways of building relationships and working with industry; and describe the elements of a facility audit to protect worker health and safety and the environment.
- Throughout the workshop, participants identified individual actions to enhance their comprehensive programs for the collection, reuse and recycling of e-waste, as well as, collective and IEMN team actions to achieve our shared mission of increasing the implementation of environmentally sound management of e-waste.
- This workshop was an activity of the International Environmental Partnership. [Doroski, Adrian, Johnson, Pollard]

EPA MEETS WITH VIETNAMESE DELEGATION TO DISCUSS CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT

- On Tuesday October 3rd, OPPT hosted a meeting with the Vietnam Chemicals Agency (Vinachemia) to share information about the implementation of the Toxic Substances Control Act.
- The six-person delegation, which was headed by the Director General of Vinachemia, also included officials from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. This meeting was part of a 10-day visit to the U.S. to learn more about chemicals management in the U.S. to help inform future revisions to Vietnam's chemicals law.
- During the discussion, EPA presented the key components of the chemical review process for both new and existing chemicals. Vietnam asked questions regarding the challenges of banning chemicals and inter-agency cooperation for chemical risk management. (Kasat)

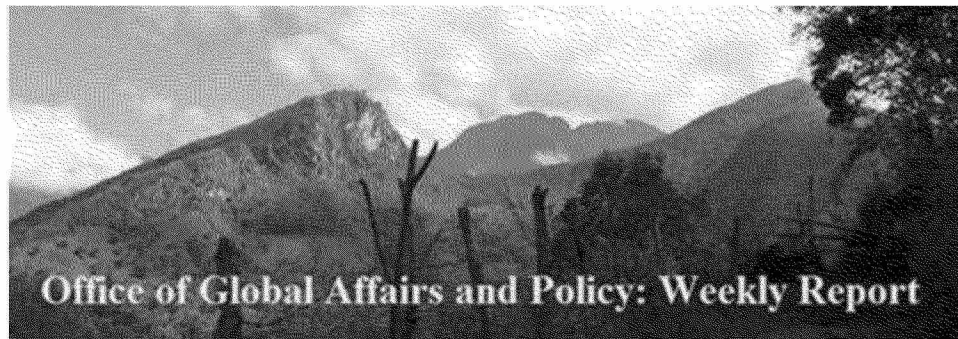
“ESCAZÚ AGREEMENT” ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND JUSTICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS OPENS FOR SIGNATURE

- Fourteen Latin American and Caribbean countries -- Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Saint Lucia, and Uruguay -- signed the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean at a 9/27 ceremony on the margins of the UN General Assembly.
- Better known as the “Escazú Agreement” for the Costa Rican city where it was signed, the Agreement seeks to ensure that all people have access to timely and reliable information, can participate effectively in the decisions that affect their lives and their surroundings, and have access to justice in environmental affairs so they can contribute to the fulfillment of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- It is the first environmental treaty among Latin America and Caribbean countries and the only of its kind in the world to emerge from the Rio + 20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.
- Eleven countries must complete their national ratification processes for the Agreement to enter into force. [Hill-Macon, Gonzalez, Hong, Mercurio]

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 11-12, PDAA Jane Nishida will deliver a keynote speech at the Yushan Forum in Taiwan and hold meetings with authorities in Taiwan.

OFFICE OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS AND POLICY
October 4, 2018



U.S., Mexico, Canada Agreement (USMCA)

After a series of high level trade negotiations over the weekend, the United States and Canada resolved remaining issues, enabling Canada to join the United States and Mexico in a modernized and comprehensive trilateral trade agreement. The agreement contains the most progressive environment chapter we have negotiated to date. Text of the agreement has been published and is now publicly available. Heads of State are anticipated to sign it in late November, possibly at the margins of the G-20 meeting. At that point, it will be submitted to Congress for approval. A Congressional vote is not expected until February or March of next year. (Ferrante)

U.S. Delegation Meeting for the Intergovernmental Review Meeting (IGR-4) on the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA)

OITA staff participated in a pre-meeting of the IGR-4 GPA delegation team to discuss draft position papers that include US positions on the implementation of the GPA during the period of 2018-2022. The GPA's work going forward will include global cooperation to address marine litter through the Regional Seas programs in order to enhance the effectiveness of national, regional and international actions to mitigate land-based marine pollution. IGR-4 is scheduled for October 31-November 1. Department of State will lead the delegation, which will include NOAA and EPA staff. [Sims]

8th Annual International E-waste Management Network Workshop

Last week, EPA, Taiwan EPA and the Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) hosted government representatives from 10 countries to share expertise and tools that could help them improve their e-waste management. The workshop took place in Manila, Philippines where experts on recycling, reuse and extended producer responsibility presented knowledge and advice to the IEMN members. Participating countries included Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Colombia, Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Egypt, and Tuvalu. Experts from industry included Sims Recycling, Cascade Asset Management, Blue Whale, Acer, E & E Recycling and SOLAR, with additional experts in auditing and certifications. United Nations University and the Partnership in Environmental Management for the Seas of South Asia shared Circulate Capital's innovative finance mechanism for solid waste management. OITA and OLEM coordinated for EPA. [Doroski, Guen-Murray, Pollard, Johnson, Adrian]

Action to address air pollution as a major risk factor for non-communicable disease successfully incorporated into new Political Declaration at UNGA

On September 27 the UN General Assembly (UNGA) 3rd High Level Meeting on Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) adopted a Political Declaration in support of the Sustainable Development Goal target to cut by one-third NCD deaths globally by 2030. NCDs currently account for seven in ten deaths around the world, primarily from cardiovascular diseases, chronic respiratory diseases, cancer, and diabetes. A Global Action Plan on NCDs (2013-2020) identifies actions to reduce four major NCD risk factors, including unhealthy diet, tobacco use, harmful use of alcohol, and physical inactivity to date. Missing from this global action agenda is the recognition and response aimed reducing air pollution as a major NCD risk factor (second only to unhealthy diet). To address this neglect, the U.S. was successful in incorporating air pollution as a fifth main NCD risk factor, with EPA providing to State Department negotiators background and text that has resulted in the inclusion of the following action item in the Political Declaration: “OP15. Increase global awareness, action and international cooperation on environmental risk factors to address the high number of premature deaths from non-communicable diseases attributed to human exposure to indoor and outdoor air pollution, and underscoring the particular importance of cross-sectoral cooperation in addressing these public health risks.” [MacDonald]

OGAP meets with UN on International Lead Paint Activities

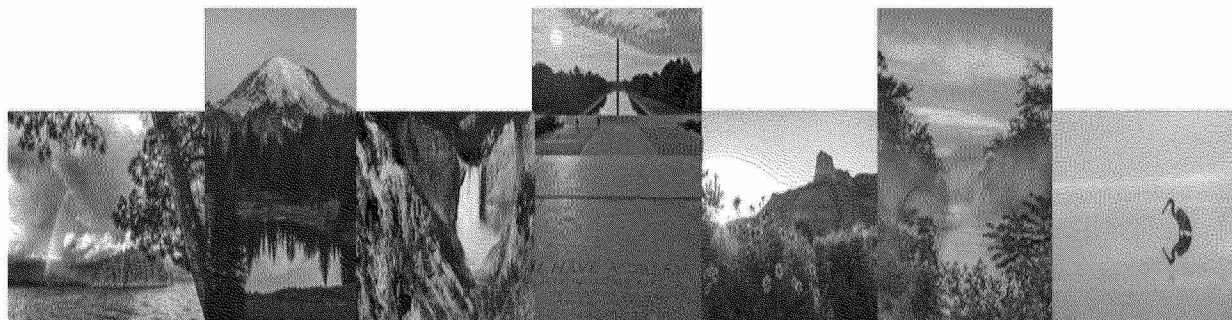
Last week OGAP attended a series of meetings with UN Environment and the World Health Organization to discuss international efforts under the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint (Lead Paint Alliance) in Geneva, Switzerland. OGAP chaired a meeting of the Advisory Council of the Lead Paint Alliance, which is comprised of Alliance partner representatives from government, industry, international organizations, and health and environmental NGOs. Participants reported out on their activities to eliminate lead paint, UN Environment announced new partners (such as NYU School of Medicine, the Government of Vietnam) and briefed the Council on the upcoming GEF Project on Lead Paint. OGAP also co-chaired a meeting with the Lead Paint Alliance Secretariat, jointly led by UN Environment and WHO, where discussions centered on how to increase momentum toward lead paint laws through an effective GEF Project. UN Environment also hosted a planning meeting of the partners of the GEF Lead Paint Project, which include EPA, the International Paint and Printing Ink Council (representing the international paint industry), Pacific Paints (a large paint company from the Philippines), WHO, and IPEN (an international environmental NGO). The GEF Project is set to launch in early 2019 with regional workshops to be held in each UN region of the world. [Smith, Bandemehr]

Upcoming Events

International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week of Action, October 22-27 – Organizations around the world will hold events to raise awareness on lead using a WHO resource package:

http://www.who.int/ipcs/lead_campaign/en/

Office of Management & International Services Weekly Report for October 1 - 5, 2018



FY 2019 Continuing Resolution: On Tuesday, September 18, 2018, the Senate passed H.R. 6157, the Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act, 2019 and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2019 by a vote of 93-7.

- On Wednesday, September 26, 2018, the House of Representatives passed the bill by a vote of 361-61.
- The President sign this legislation on Friday, September 28, 2018. This enacted bill includes a continuing resolution that provides the EPA with funding starting today through December 7, 2018, using the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2018 (Public Law 115-141) as the base.
- The House of Representatives and Senate are scheduled to return from a recess on November 13, 2018. Once the House and Senate return, they may continue conference negotiations on H.R 6147, Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2019. (See M. Weckesser)

Safe Disposal of Expired Medications: On Wednesday, Oct. 24, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., bring unwanted or expired prescription medications to the Ronald Reagan Building Health Unit room G1-20 or the Potomac Yard Health Unit room S-1400 for safe, free and anonymous disposal.

- This event will be held in conjunction with the Drug Enforcement Administration's National Prescription Drug Take-Back Initiative to prevent drug abuse and theft by ridding homes of expired or unwanted medications. For more information about prescription drug disposal, visit the EPA intranet.
- If you have questions about the event, please contact SeVera Wilson at 202-564-0097.

GAD Policy Changes: The Office of Grants and Debarment (OGD) has issued the following Policy changes effective October 1, 2018:

- Grants Policy Issuance (GPI) 18-03: EPA Electronic Payment and Proper Payment Drawdown Policy (ASAP Policy). The ASAP Policy is now available on the GPI Topics Intranet page, along with helpful resources, such as supplemental internal guidance and training. Also included is a list of those EPA assistance agreement recipients not enrolled in ASAP. This list will be updated monthly so that prior to award EPA grants personnel can verify those recipients not enrolled in ASAP.
- OGD also issued a public facing Recipient/Applicant Information Notice, RAIN-2018-G06 to notify applicants and recipients of the ASAP Policy requirements. Applicants or recipients who cannot satisfy one or both requirements of the policy may request exceptions to the policy requirements prior to or after award if they demonstrate that compliance will impose undue administrative or financial management burdens on the recipient or that granting the waiver is otherwise in the public interest. Policy exceptions are detailed in the external facing RAIN-2018-G06.
- Rescission of GPI 08-02 and Revision of GPI 11-01; Notice 2018-G12 has been posted to the Policy Notice Library intranet page
- Grants Policy Issuance 14-01 (GPI 14-01), *Electronic Submission of Initial Grant Applications*, to require that all initial proposals include all forms necessary for award.
- Revised GPI 13-02, *Streamlining Tribal Grants Management*, and rescinds GPI 08-01, *Bundling of Grant Application Assurances/Certifications for Regionally-awarded Grants to State agencies under 40 CFR Part 35*, to discontinue the allowance of bundling grants application assurances and certifications by tribal and state applicants, respectively.
- 18-01, *Suspension and Debarment*, with an effective date of October 1, 2018. This GPI outlines the responsibilities of EPA personnel involved in the administration and management of covered transactions as described in Attachment A of the GPI and funds-out IAs that fund covered transactions.
- Updated Assistance Agreement Terms and Conditions have been updated for FY2019 (<https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-general-terms-and-conditions-effective-october-1-2018>). In addition, several T&Cs that were previously in IGMS have been moved to the General T&Cs, including #9. *Foreign Travel* and #10. *Fly America Act and Foreign Travel*. The new T&Cs are:
 - #4. ASAP and Proper Payment Drawdown Term and Condition,
 - #15. Indirect Cost Rate Agreements,
 - #18. Suspension and Debarment,
 - #19. Representation by Corporations Regarding Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Conviction under any Federal Law (replaces previous T&C Unpaid Federal Tax Liabilities and Felony Convictions for Non-Profit and For-Profit Organizations),
 - #22. *Transfer of Funds*,
 - #34. Scientific Integrity

Quarterly Performance Review: OCFO provided guidance for the development of the Q4 Quarterly Performance Review (QPR) for the Acting Administrator; scheduled for November 1, 2018.

- Similar to the last QPR (FY18 Q2), OCFO is taking a close look at
 - Missed targets for our 26 long-term performance goals in our strategic plan and
 - Reform plan priority areas
- In addition, OCFO will develop slides on overall measure improvements, progress toward the Agency-wide measures, and a single slide on long-term performance goals with data gaps.
 - Measure Discussion Template

Missed Target: [Measure Short Title]
Long-Term Performance Goal Owner: [Office] Lead: [Metric Owner's Name]

[PG Goal/Objective/Measure Number: Long-term Performance Goal, full measure text]

Results
 Target: [XX, unit of measure]
 Actual: [XX, unit of measure]

Root cause
 [The root cause is the action, behavior, or system element that is leading to the visible problem. The 5 Whys approach will help you get much closer to the root cause of the problem. A resource with examples on the 5 Whys approach can be found [here](#).]

Progress Made in FY18

- * 1-3 bullets on result(s) of actions taken to address the root cause of the missed target (including relevant responses to the Q2 QPR Follow Up Actions).
- * Include progress identified in APG Actions Plans if applicable.

Actions Planned through End of 1st Quarter FY19

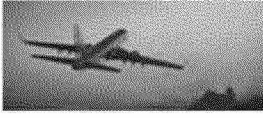
- * A maximum of three specific actions that will be taken in FY 2019 to improve performance.
- * Please provide specific timeframes/dates where possible.
- * Include reference to Reform Plan Priority Area/ A3 / Kaizen/ Lean events/ APG Action Plans/ etc. (as appropriate).

○ OITA does not have any measures to report on for this review.

12 Reasons a Grant Funding Package is Returned to PO: OGD updated the “12 Reasons to Return a Funding Package” also known as the “Elvis list”. Visit the below link to review the updated version. http://intranet.epa.gov/ogd/policy/fr_rework_policy_guidance.pdf (See L. Connell)

International Visitors Meetings for October 8 through October 12:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	OAR – Delegation from China OAR – Delegation from India OAR – Delegation from Nigeria OARM – Delegation from Chile	OITA – Delegation from Chile OAR – Delegation from Japan	OITA – Delegation from Chile	



Travel by EPA senior managers

Traveler: Jane Nishida, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, OITA
Destinations: TAIPEI - TAIWAN
Meeting: EPA Taiwan Minister Meeting
Date: 10/09/2018